

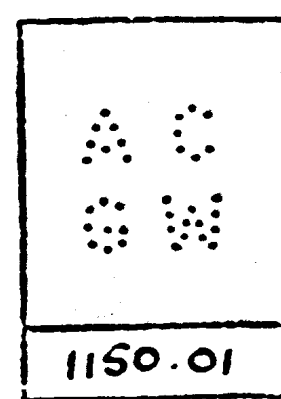
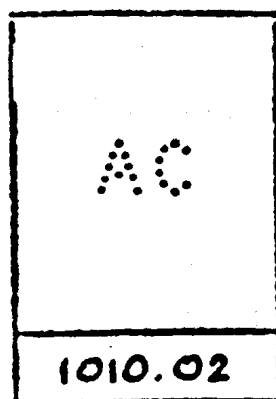
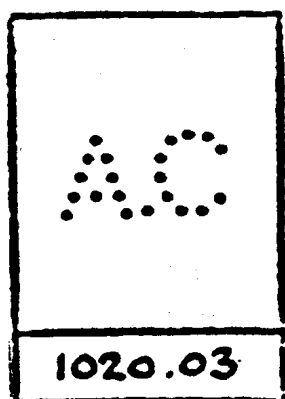
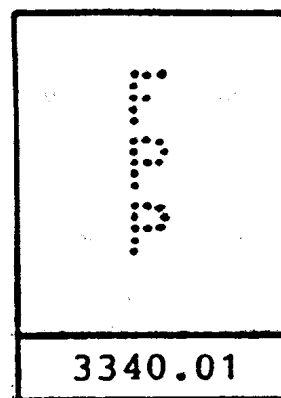
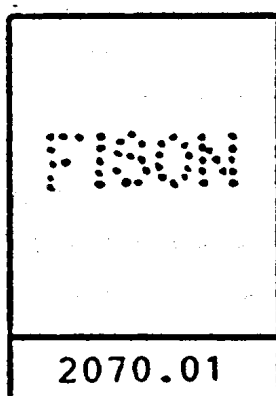
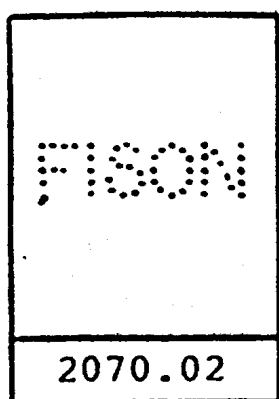
## FISON – THE FIRM & THE PERFINS

By Dave Hill

Frank Clavering Fison was born in 1892. The death of his elder brother, then his father, plus the poor health of his uncle resulted in him running the family fertilizer business of Joseph Fison & Co. of Ipswich, from the end of W.W.I, until he retired as Chairman in 1962 to become Life President. It had not been intended that he should do this but, despite his lack of knowledge of the business, in the difficult times of the depression of the 20's and 30's he expanded the fertilizer side at home and abroad whilst he sold off flour milling interests.

In 1929 the firm amalgamated with two Suffolk fertilizer firms to form Fison, Packard & Prentice Ltd. Two full name dies "FISON" are known. The first F2070.02 is known used by Joseph Fison & Co on E VII stamps, the second F2070.01 is known used by Fison, Packard & Prentice on E VIII stamps. (It is worth noting that Roy catalogues perfins with fewest holes, smallest height first and most holes/highest last. Perfins are generally found to be used in exactly the opposite order; early dies were tall and had lots of pins, later dies were short and had few pins.)

A new die, F3340.01 (F/P/P) is known used on GV and GVI stamps



In 1937 Anglo-Continental Guano Works were taken over. In chronological order they used perfins A1020.03 (A.C); A1010.02 (AC); A1150.01 (AC/GW).

I'm not sure who made these machines but the Sub Postmaster at St. Peter's, Ipswich, W.L.Kenny, perforated about £6000 of stamps in 1906. He had previously been at St.Nicholas', Ipswich, and in 1907 he took over the Sub Post Office in Tabernacle Street, London from Braham who had been doing quite a lot of perforating but went bankrupt. Some of Braham's creditors looked to the Post Office to get their money back but were told that stamps were perforated as part of the Sub Postmaster's private business, not his official Post Office business. The Post Office insisted after this time that any reference to the Post Office or Royal Coats of Arms etc should not appear on forms to do with the private business of a Sub Postmaster.

When interviewed for the Tabanacle Street job, Kenny in answer to a direct question stated he would not take over the perforating. However, a year later, he wrote to the Post Office saying that "The perforating of stamps which I formally had done through Sloper's, I will now be doing myself and enclosed a sample form for approval. It must have been the perforating side that attracted him.

Braham went on to the Printing & Stamp Perforating Co. at 9 Smith Street, London E.C. I am unaware how long they lasted.

Underlying all this there seems to be some "underground" perforating intelligence system. It couldn't have been coincidence that Kenny, who had perforated at Ipswich, should apply for the job at the Tabanacle Street Sub Post Office. Whether it was just Braham and Kenny or whether Sloper's were involved, however innocently, we may never know. We may never find out whether the work that Kenny had had done by Sloper's was whilst he was at Ipswich or Tabanacle Street and whether in fact, in future, it was being done by Braham at the Printing & Stamp Perforating Co.!

Fisons" history from Butterworth's Dictionary of Business Biography.

Information on Kenny, Braham and Sloper from Post Office Archive material, summarised by me in Bulletins 262 & 263.